

# THE QUIVER

Saturday, September 29, 1866.



(Drawn by M. ELLEN EDWARDS.)

"It's Nelly!"—p. 20.

## BREAD UPON THE WATERS.

"WHAT are we to do with that child?" said George Feldrick to his wife.

Mrs. Feldrick looked up hurriedly from her work, and the kind motherly face took a keen look

of anxiety, as her eyes followed her husband's from the open window at which he was standing to the garden beyond, where a little girl's golden head was just visible, busily at work tying up

broken pinks, scattered sweet peas, and otherwise repairing, to the best of her small powers, evident tokens of some recent mischief.

"Hopie, do you mean?"

Yes; it's a good two years now since we have had a penny for her keep and schooling; it's but fair to think we need never expect another; and we've children of our own to think of, Mary."

"I should scarce dare think of mine, when I said my prayers at night, then, George, if we deserted the orphan and the fatherless, for Hopie's as good as that," Mrs. Feldrick burst out impetuously, all her motherly tenderness, her pitiful woman's generosity up in arms at the base thought her husband had suggested.

"Who said anything about deserting? but a man's duty is to look to his own first; and times are bad, and mayn't mend; and I've enough to do with getting schooling for Nelly and the boys, without playing the father to other men's children."

"Oh, George! she's never known a father but you!" and the tears springing into his wife's eyes sent the simple words home to Mr. Feldrick's heart.

He was neither a cold-hearted nor ungenerous man; and when he asked that question concerning little Hope Dauntton that set his wife's heart in a motherly glow of indignation, spoke only out of many cares and anxieties, such as beset a man with a rising family and but very poor prospects.

At the time when Mrs. Feldrick had taken the little foster-child to bring up among her own flock George had been a comparatively prosperous man, and by the time the little one could toddle about by the side of his own darling Nelly he would have cared very little if the yearly sum paid through some indirect channel for the child's maintenance had ceased; but things had gone badly with him since then, and if poverty sometimes brings to light virtues that prosperity would have suffered to lie hidden, it as often, God help us! drags into day unsuspected basenesses in the best of us. Once, George Feldrick would have indignantly scorned the idea that he could ever regard little Hope's residence among them as a burden; but now, oppressed by a too anxious thought for the things of to-morrow, the idea not only presented itself, but was for a while entertained.

Yet something like remorse came upon him when Hope Dauntton came in presently among the three young Feldricks, to give father and mother the good-night kiss. She had never known father or mother, except himself and his wife; in all probability she never would now; and as the little golden head was lifted towards him beside his own dark-haired Nelly's, somehow the words, "Inasmuch as ye have done it to the least of these little ones," rushed into his mind, and as he kissed the unconscious child, a prayer went up from

his heart that God would help him to do his duty by the orphan.

From that time there was no question of Hope's ever finding another home. She and Nelly Feldrick grew up together, scarce conscious that they were not sisters in reality, as they were, at least on Hope's part, in affection. As for Nelly, pretty, gay-hearted, coquettish, vain little Nelly, the idol of her father, and the admiration of every one who looked upon her, she was, perhaps, too much taken up with herself, at the age of eighteen or so, to be able to spare very much devotion for any one else.

As the girls grew up, they both attracted the notice of the family at the Hall, whose owner was Mr. Feldrick's landlord; and, finally, Nelly was installed by Mrs. Deersley in the post of mistress to the school she had established on her own property. The salary was of some importance to the Feldricks, and yet Nelly's mother would almost rather have relinquished the gain to have kept the girl at home under her own eye.

"I wish Mrs. Deersley had offered the situation to Hopie instead," she said once to her husband. "I am afraid all these fine lady and gentleman visitors to the school are doing Nelly no good. She is learning to think too much of her pretty face and herself. Hope is different; no compliment and petting could turn her steady little head."

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Feldrick. He thought it perfectly natural, for his part, that every one should admire and spoil Nelly. So one day, when his daughter came home in high spirits and announced that a lady visitor at the Hall, Mrs. Fanshawe, had taken a great fancy to her, and offered her the situation of companion to herself, with no harder duties than to look pretty and be agreeable (two things that came naturally to Nelly, her father thought), George was inclined to be angry with his wife for the grave and doubtful face with which she listened to this proposal.

Nelly was wild to accept it, of course; the offer opened to the little country girl a dim, glorious vision of herself surrounded by all the luxuries and pleasures that were at the command of a wealthy and fashionable patroness like Mrs. Fanshawe; and though Mr. Feldrick thought with a pang of a fire-side with the bright face of his darling gone from beside it, he was too little proof against Nelly's caressing and coaxing, not to second any wish of hers.

"It would be standing in the child's way to put ourselves between her and the fancy this lady has taken for her," he said to his wife at night, when the girls had gone to their room, and he and Mrs. Feldrick discussed the matter. "Who knows what may come of it?"

"Who, indeed?" echoed Mrs. Feldrick; and for once it was the man's fancy that was running wild, and the woman's clear sense trying to hold

it in check. "I only mean, George," she added, "that we know nothing of this lady, and that her sudden fancy for Nelly, may as suddenly fix upon some other toy. Let me go up to the Hall, and ask Mr. Deersley's advice, before you decide upon Nelly's leaving us?"

"You may be sure I don't want to part with my girl," he answered; "home will hardly be home to me when her sweet face is gone from it; but we've two of them to think of, and I won't stand in the child's light if I can help it."

So Mrs. Feldrick's purpose was overruled by Nelly's violent objection to it, and her father's utter subjection to his daughter's pleasure; and a week or two saw Nelly depart in high spirits with her patroness for London, while Hope Dauntton quietly succeeded to the position of schoolmistress which Nelly relinquished, and whose duties, as Mrs. Deersley informed her husband very shortly, she performed infinitely better than that pretty, light-headed Nelly Feldrick had ever done.

In due time came a letter from Nelly, written in a perfect whirl of pleasure. Mrs. Fanshawe was everything that was kind; she had really nothing to do beyond those very easy duties first specified; London was a city of delights; Mrs. Fanshawe's visitors the pleasantest people in the world, and Nelly was the happiest girl in it.

That was Nelly's first letter; the next and the next were something in the same strain; but then came intervals, always lengthening between them, and at last a long silence, which no entreaties from home sufficed to break.

They were beginning to feel very uneasy, when one morning brought a letter which Mr. Feldrick read with a face that looked absolutely ghastly as he did so, and that fell from his hand presently as if sense and life were withered by its contents.

"Oh, Nelly! my girl, my Nelly!" came in groans from his white lips, as Mrs. Feldrick, with Hope's pale face looking over her shoulder, read the brief and cruel letter, in which Mrs. Fanshawe informed the stricken father that his daughter had chosen to leave her house, without informing her of her destination, on her discovery of Miss Feldrick's dishonesty, which she had for some time suspected.

"As the young person has been a *protégée* of my friend Mrs. Deersley," Mrs. Fanshawe wrote, "I told her, on the discovery of her undoubted guilt, I should not take the course which my conscience tells me was the right one, but should immediately write to her parents, and desire them to remove her from my house, till which time she would remain in the room she occupied in it. Instead of the thanks I might reasonably have expected from this very lenient course, Miss Feldrick behaved with that insolence and ingratitude so distinctive of her class in life, and the next

thing I heard was that she had left my house, of which step I think it only right to inform you."

In an hour or two after the receipt of this letter the miserable father was on his way to London in search of the missing girl, leaving Hope and her mother to that agony of watching and waiting which seems to be the portion of women in most of life's bitter troubles, who cannot dull the sharpest edge of suffering in action. They scarcely dared look in one another's pale faces as the day stole on; for, oh! if Nelly was innocent and wronged, why was she not at home? and if not at home, where was she? It was three days since she had left Mrs. Fanshawe's house, and a few hours would have sufficed to bring her to her father's; but she had never come, and unknown to all, save the pitying One on high, was the horror of the fears and doubts that possessed the loving mother and sister.

Daughter, in affection and duty, Hope had always been to the woman whose tender heart had early adopted the little deserted child into the place of one of her own, and now, if Hope had been her daughter indeed, this trial could not have been more equally shared between them. It was about harvest-time, when all country schools are broken up, so that Hope had no calls upon her time, and together the many hours lengthening into days were spent, till that miserable one when George Feldrick came home alone, and worse still, with no clue to the fate of the lost girl.

He came home, looking only the shadow of the strong man who had left them; so utterly broken down that he scarcely seemed capable of answering the few questions they dared press him with. Nelly was disgraced, lost! that was all he knew; and from the time he re-entered his own door, all energy and thought seemed to collapse, till before night he lay in the dreary lethargy and alternate ravings of fever.

This new emergency claimed all the time and cares of the two women, as similar ones always do; but when all was done, and they sat together by the bed-side of the unconscious sufferer, at night, Hope said, with the quiet of a matured resolution, "Mother, I must go to London to-morrow morning."

"You, Hope! Oh, no, no, my child. What could you do that her father has not done?"

"I don't know; but I feel there is more to be done. My father cannot do it, it is plain; and you cannot, for your place is beside him now. Dear mother, I must go."

"My dear! You, a young girl, alone in a place like London! Oh, no, Hope; it would be wicked of me to consent. Ah, if her brothers were only here!"

"But they are not, mother; and, meanwhile,

Nelly is not found. How shall we ever sleep in our beds till she is? I must go."

Ignorant as a child of the world—almost as timid as one, too; strong only in her love and grateful devotion to her foster-parents—Hope carried out her purpose; and the next day found her in London for the first time in her life. She went first to Mrs. Martin, a cousin of Mr. Feldrick's, who willingly agreed to receive her for a few days, and thence immediately set out upon her search. In the first place, she wrote to Mrs. Fanshawe—went again and again, before she finally gained access to her; and when at last she did so, through a little stratagem on the part of one of the servants, who was moved by her gentleness, her earnestness, and her pale face, she came out from the interview with little indeed gained. Mrs. Fanshawe knew no more than she had already written and reported to Mr. Feldrick about the worthless girl who had so abused the favour she had shown her; begged she might be troubled no more on the odious subject; and so dismissed the weeping and yet indignant girl.

She had already left the house on this last occasion, and was walking slowly, trying to recover herself and think what was best to be done next, when there were steps behind her, and immediately she was overtaken by the servant who had gained her the interview.

"Ah, I see you haven't got anything satisfactory," he said, as Hope turned her tearful eyes upon him in surprise. "You mustn't be angry if I say I've found out you came about that pretty Miss Feldrick, that went off all of a hurry; for, perhaps, as I have found it out, I may do you a service."

"If you could only help me to find her!" burst from Hope, as the great tears rushed from her eyes once more.

"Poor thing—poor thing!" said the man, hurriedly. "You're her sister, I guess? Well, look here, I should lose my place if it was to come out: but I've had trouble myself; and I never did believe a word of Miss Feldrick's helping herself to mistress's things. The fact is, Mrs. Fanshawe is whimsy, like many other ladies; and she takes fancies and tires of them. She got tired of Miss Feldrick, that was everything at one time; and I don't think she altogether liked her son being so taken up with the pretty young lady. Look, now,—I've found out where she's gone to: there's the address. I advise you to go there as quickly as possible."

He put a slip of paper into her hand, and hastened away almost before Hope could thank him; while she, looking at the address with dimmed eyes, her heart beating wildly with hope and thankfulness, amid strange lurking fears, called a passing cab, and desired to be driven to the address written on the paper.

It was a respectable-looking house in a quiet street at which they stopped.

"Miss Feldrick?" said Hope faintly, almost rushing into the house as soon as the door was opened.

"Miss Feldrick," repeated the woman, quietly barring the way—"Miss Feldrick's not here: she left last night."

"Oh! where did she go?"

"Can't say indeed. She didn't tell me where she was going," the woman answered, coldly. Then, as if moved by the agony of disappointment in Hope's face, she added, meaningly, "She went *alone*, and of her own accord; but as you seem to be a relative, I must say, that if she had not gone, I should have given her notice, for mine's a respectable house, and I don't like gentlemen's servants coming about it to no lady lodgers of mine."

Not a clue further could Hope gain, and, turning despairingly away, she went back to her present home; and there talking over what had come to her knowledge with Mr. Feldrick's cousin, they agreed that the only thing left to do was to seek the servant who had given Hope the address; and, accordingly, in the evening she set out to return once more to Mrs. Fanshawe's, Mrs. Martin walking with her as some guide and protection.

They were crossing Westminster Bridge, on which the lessening traffic left but few passengers by this time, and Hope had involuntarily lingered an instant to look at the darkening river beneath, where the last glory of the sunset sky was still reflected in a fiery glow on bank and stream, when her companion suddenly uttered an exclamation, and caught Hope by the arm as she was dashing forward with a wild inarticulate cry; for in that instant, sharply defined against the purple sky, a figure stood upon the low parapet of the bridge, turning upwards for one breathless instant a wild white face to the calm heavens, and then—then Hope tore herself away from her friend's hold, she caught the fluttering skirts and dragged them, the figure itself, down from the parapet, clinging with desperate hold about it, even when they both stood faint and sickening on the safe footway. A crowd collected in an instant, as a crowd will in London even when the streets are quietest, and Mrs. Martin, greatly shocked, tried to draw Hope from among it.

"There, my dear, you've saved the poor creature; bat come away now, pray come away, she'll be taken care of—come away."

But Hope's clutch upon the poor desperate creature lying gasping in her arms never loosened; she turned a white face, with a wild joyful smile upon it that Mrs. Martin never forgot, and said simply, "It's my sister—it's Nelly!"

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Hope took her home the next day, and when she had laid the poor penitent weeping girl in her father's arms, Mrs. Feldrick folded Hope in her own, and blessed her.

"My darling," she said, "God gave you to us in mercy. I always seemed to see a blessing in your gentle face."

"While I have been like one who entertains an angel unawares," George Feldrick said, sadly.

It was long before the suspicion that rested upon Nelly's good name was cleared away, though this through the unwearied exertions of her adopted sister was finally achieved. It seemed that Nelly had attracted the notice and admiration of Mrs. Fanshawe's only son, to the great anger of his mother, and she, anxious to grasp at any means of loosening the hold she feared Nelly might have upon his fancy, adopted with eagerness a suspicion artfully instilled by her maid—who was deeply jealous of the young favourite—of Miss Feldrick's honesty. Finally, some article of dress was missing, which was actually traced into Nelly's possession, who, utterly astounded and unable to

account for it, believing herself hopelessly compromised, and half mad at the prospect of seeing her father, with a charge of such a nature hanging over her, with every apparent evidence of her guilt, took the desperate resolution of leaving Mr. Fanshawe's, and hiding herself till she could establish her innocence. But by some means Arthur Fanshawe discovered her abode, and in endeavouring to prevail upon her to see him, excited the anger of the landlady, which Nelly indignantly resented by leaving her house directly. Without friends, with very little money, the girl wandered about London, and those wanderings would have terminated as so many others have done, but for Hope Dauntton.

Poor Nelly's perfect innocence of the charge against her was proved by the admission of the woman who had placed the missing article in her drawer; but the vain, gay, light-hearted Nelly of old days is gone for ever, and in her place a quiet subdued little figure shares Hope's daily tasks, and follows her with unspoken blessings.

J. R. M.

## A WORD UPON SURPRISES.

BY THE REV. W. M. STATHAM, AUTHOR OF "SURE STANDARDS OF THE FAITH," ETC.



There are beings capable of manifold sensations. Surprise is one of them. I do not envy the used-up race, whose countenances say: "Don't think you can interest or astonish us. We're past all that. We are neither about to laugh or cry—to smile or start. We've explored every region of nature and experience, and for us there's nothing new." Well, I see nothing beautiful or desirable in feeling that everything in the world is *passé*, nor do I admire the countenance over which there plays no rippling wave of feeling. What makes it so delightful to take a child to the Polytechnic or the Crystal Palace, but the exquisite sense of freshness and delight in all the experiences of the child? I hope we elder children are not yet beyond the sensation of surprise.

There is a moral teaching in this subject, or I should not desire to take it up. We talk familiarly enough sometimes about being surprised into a good action! In certain circles of earnest friends even the churl and the cynic suddenly find that their kindlier nature starts up to assert itself. It is said that many a man is better than his creed, and I am sure a good many are better than their manner and their speech. Now and then the better nature wakes up and comes to the window of the senses, and looks out, and says or does some kind thing. It is possible sometimes

to take a heart by surprise as well as a city! That is a glorious moment in any human history when something starts from its slumber the dormant feelings; more especially is this beautiful in the sphere, not only of the human sympathies but the divine soul.

Sometimes a little child's question, such as "Does you love Dord?" will do it. Sometimes the faded letter of a devout mother will arouse a world-imprisoned soul, and surprise the worldly and the wicked. There is one aspect of this subject, however, which has to do with the providence of God. This world is full of surprises. We never know what shall be on the morrow. The most seemingly unlikely things occur every day. There is, for instance, the old proverb, "When one door shuts another door opens." Something occurs which did not enter into our category of possibilities, and we learn how kind a Father is ours, who thus gladdens us by good things, of which the imagination never dreamed. Providence is full of all manner of kind surprisals. If you are down-spirited and sore-broken to-day, take heart, dear reader, your cup will yet run over, and you will sing of the loving-kindness of the Lord.

You may say, This is but one side of the subject. There are sorrowful surprisals. Many see the flower of the noonday withered at night. The child they in the morning left in health, lies cold and dead at

evening. Yes, there are many such surprises, and the very soul staggers under them. It is quaint but good advice—Count nought your own. The most precious treasures are often the most suddenly taken, and if we do not live in the atmosphere of holy submission to the Divine will, sometimes reason may be imperilled as well as health. Death, too, may surprise us all—coming at a season and in a way we little dreamed of; for which reason we ought to strive after a constant readiness for the going home.

Admitting, therefore, that the subject has two aspects, let me keep your eye for a moment on the more blessed surprises of life. The light coming from an unexpected quarter just when it was very dark. The tide rising high enough to float your barque just when you thought she was stranded for ever. The pathway opening up in the tangled forest just as you had lost your way! How often these things occur in every life! and how often, too, in that very hour of death to which I have referred! After years of darkness and doubt, there comes a crimson glory over the horizon of faith, and at evening time it is light!

Nature often has some sweet surprises for us—some glorious openings, where through the riven rocks we see the precious pastures, the tall pine-forests, the craggy forelands, and the ever-glorious sea! And so, too, has Providence; for the faithful, the earnest, and the true there are many epochs little expected in the chapters of human history.

Some caustic critic may suggest that too much of this view of the case will make Micawber-like men, always waiting for something to turn up; but let it be remembered that the surprises of such men are in other directions; their wonderments are of quite another order. To their astonishment the world refuses to work upside down. Laziness will not produce the fruits of labour; impudence will not secure the wages of integrity; improvidence will not end in plenty. They are surprised that something *doesn't* turn up, and that the great laws of God's good world work on without rewarding them.

Let me suggest, in connection with the surprises which can be created by ourselves, what a pleasant thing it is to surprise others;—to send an unexpected hamper, full of all good things, to some dear old servant of the family who lives o'er the hills and far away in some northern province; or in some kind way to create a sensation of pleasure in those to whom some simple remembrance may be very precious indeed! To create such a surprise will gladden yourself amazingly. Who does not remember in Charles Dickens's exquisite Christmas Carol, how old Scrooge, the "squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner," on that Christmas morning, after he had been completely changed by the ghostly

visions of the night, heard the bells in the morning when he awoke, "Clash, clang, hammer: ding, dong, bell. Bell, dong, ding: hammer, clang, clash!" and cried out, "Oh! glorious, glorious!" and running to his window, found it was Christmas Day! Glimpsing a boy, he says—

"Do you know the poulterer's in the next street but one, at the corner?"

"I should hope I did," replied the lad.

"An intelligent boy," said Scrooge; "a remarkable boy! Do you know whether they've sold the prize turkey that was hanging up there? Not the little prize turkey: the big one.

"What the one as big as me?" said the boy.

"Yes, my buck!"

"It's hanging there now," replied the boy.

"Is it?" said Scrooge. "Go and buy it!"

"WALKER!" exclaimed the boy.

You remember how Scrooge gave him half-a-crown for going quickly for it, and that the young rascal was off like a shot. Before the turkey arrived, however, Scrooge thus soliloquised:—

"I'll send it to Bob Cratchit's!" rubbing his hands and splitting with a laugh. "He shan't know who sends it! It's twice the size of Tiny Tim. Joe Miller never made such a joke as sending it to Tim's will be!"

You remember how "the hand in which he wrote the address was not a steady one;" and that with an honest ecstasy he cried at last—"Here's the turkey. Hallo! Whoop!" and sent the boy off with it in a cab.

"The chuckle with which he said this, and the chuckle with which he paid for the turkey, and the chuckle with which he paid for the cab, and the chuckle with which he recompensed the boy, were only to be exceeded by the chuckle with which he sat down breathless in his chair again and chuckled till he cried."

Scrooge was creating a surprise—a gladdening surprise. Reader, if you can do so to any forgotten one at this moment, do not wait to finish this article. Ring the bell; order the necessities; write the direction: and then spend one of the happiest half-hours you ever enjoyed in your life!

I hold it to be a very honourable thing for the ensign to like to surprise his parents by getting a lieutenancy; for the merchant's clerk to feel that the gladdest aspect of the promised partnership is that he can surprise the old folks at home! I hate to see the absence of a laudable ambition in the minds of the young. Kept under the governing and restraining power of Christian principles, it is one of the noblest characteristics, and results in much good, both in the sphere of home and in the weal of the world.

It is not a pleasant thing to have certain kinds of surprises. I remember a pencilling of John

Leech's, which shows the unpleasant side of the case: a shop-lad is eagerly coming down on a blow-fly with his open palm, and as he is in the act of capturing it, his master, who has neared him with stealthy tread, is concurrently coming down on the boy's back with a tremendous thwack. This is typical enough of some surprises, both in early and late days. It is said in the old proverb, "The feet of the avenging deities are shod with wool." We hear no tread, but we feel the avenging blow. We cannot help a kind of natural exultation when wicked doers are, so to speak, tripped up; when one who has performed some action which he thinks he can sneak out of, is suddenly detected and punished without remedy! But whatever may be the case in this world, there is the surprise of just punishment awaiting all evil-doers in the next. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." No handwriting on the walls of heaven's temple arrests them here; but it will be found at last: there are punitive surprisals for our personal sins.

Some surprisals are connected with accidental sort of visits. It is common enough to have occurred in every one's experience, that a chance dropping-in has often had more of real life and enjoyment than a planned visit. Of course a surprise visit supposes that we are sure of the kindest reception at any time to the home of those we thus surprise! We must all have met with the man who, having a certain kind of *bonhomie*

about him, drops in upon almost strangers and says, after carefully regulating his visit to the dinner-hour, "I thought I would surprise you!" It must indeed be very awkward to make an unwelcome surprise, and feel the breeze of Arctic seas. But where we are as sure to be welcomed as the sun is at a pic-nic, then it is pleasant indeed to go through the back-garden gate and steal a march upon the old gardener by going round the shrubbery, and then make all the faces astonished in the assembled family, by the pleasant announcement that it is ourselves indeed.

Little surprisals are pleasant, in the form of letters and gifts, and go to make home happy and the world more cheerful. We miss much of the happiness of human life in forgetting the multitude of insignificant ways in which some slender exercise of care and consideration would do good to others.

I must close this paper with the brief suggestion that a blessed surprise hereafter awaits all those who love and serve the Saviour. The moment that ushers in eternal day a glorious surprisal awaits us, as we solve the mystery of death, and enter into the august presence of the Lamb; for "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

"We sing of the realms of the blessed,  
That country so bright and so fair!  
And oft are its glories confessed—  
But what must it be to be there!"

## GOD'S FLOWERS

BY MATTHIAS BARR.

**N**OOK up, sweet wife, through happy tears,  
And see our tiny buds ablow,  
With yearning souls that strive to show,  
And burst the tender green of years.

So sweet they hang upon life's stem,  
Their beauty stills our very breath  
As, thinking of the spoiler, Death,  
We bend in silence over them,

And shed our dew of praise and prayer  
On hearts that turn towards the sun,  
And watch the leaflets, one by one,  
That scent for us the common air.

And she, our latest blossom given,  
That scarce hath lost the dimple-touch

Of God's own fingers, and, as such,  
Still pulses to the throb of heaven;

And blind with brightness of his face,  
Lies dreaming in a nest of love,  
With ears that catch the sounds that move  
And swell around the Throne of Grace!—

Ah! how for her our hearts will peer  
And look, with faith, through swimming eyes,  
For balmy winds and summer skies,  
And tremble when a cloud is near.

Dear flowers of God! how much we owe  
To what you give us, all unsought—  
The grandeur and the glory caught  
From hills where truth and wisdom grow.

## THE ITALIAN ORGAN-MEN.



THE task of saying a few words about these abused and little-understood foreigners is by no means an unpleasant one, for all who know their simple story, their hard life and its many struggles, must respect that spirit of endurance which is so great, I may say so grand a feature in the Italian character, from the prince to the peasant, and which has enabled them to suffer on, always hopeful and waiting for that "good time coming"—as we say—and which seems now about to rise for Italy, and thus recompense her waiting, enduring children, by giving them political as well as religious liberty.

But to the subject. To many persons the street-organ is a nuisance; but there are others to whom it is a pleasure, and those, also, who are Christian enough to tolerate the instrument for the sake of the poor grinder, who so patiently walks the weary miles with his heavy burthen. And when he stops in the quietest street and plays those tunes—generally Italian—how the sounds must sadden the poor fellow's heart as each note recalls the scenes of his home in far-off sunny Italy! Look at the groups of little ragged, dirty children who have collected around him, and see how kindly he resigns the handle to the boy or girl who has taken hold of it; and he still lets the usurper of his instrument play on, and yet he must be quite sure that among that ragged band there is not one who can give him even a halfpenny. Perhaps he has a child like one of these little ones in his far-off home, among the Alps; or a tiny sister, very dear to him, and the remembrance of her makes him deal gently and kindly with these little ones, of whom our Redeemer said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

There are few persons who, on looking at these ill-clad, weary-looking wanderers, would suppose the amount of interest—I may almost say romance—which, in the generality of cases, belongs to their story.

The *contadini*, or peasants of Italy—to which class our organ-men belong—are very poor, and from very early boyhood their idea is always to rectify this trouble. The ambition of every one is to become a "proprietor" in a small way—that is, to become the possessor of a small plot of ground, whereon to build his small cottage, and grow his vine; and as a means to obtain this, he travels to some richer country—either Paris or London—and then commences the fight for money under the *padrone*.

But, before going further, we must inquire who

and what is the *padrone*. He it is who possesses a large quantity of street amusement tackle—if I may say it—organs, hurdy-gurdies, white mice, guinea pigs, &c. &c., which he lets out to those who have a little money and can hire them. In that case, all the money the Italian takes in the day is his own, and the desired plot of land is not so long in the getting. But the poor fellow who lets himself for a few sous daily to the *padrone*, is obliged, under a *severe penalty*, to bring every sou which he gets to the *padrone*, and it is a very long time before the small sum (500 or 600 francs) is got together.

So true to their promise are these poor fellows, that on one occasion (to the writer's knowledge) a poor organ-man gained the sympathy of a benevolent gentleman who, hearing that this poor fellow had a wife and children in Italy, for whom he was toiling to gain a little money so that he might rejoice these loved ones, this kind Christian gave the man some pounds, which the organ man gave to his *padrone*; and he, although at that time worth more than £50,000, took the money, knowing that it had been given personally to the Italian, as a peculiar gift to the wife and children he so yearned for.

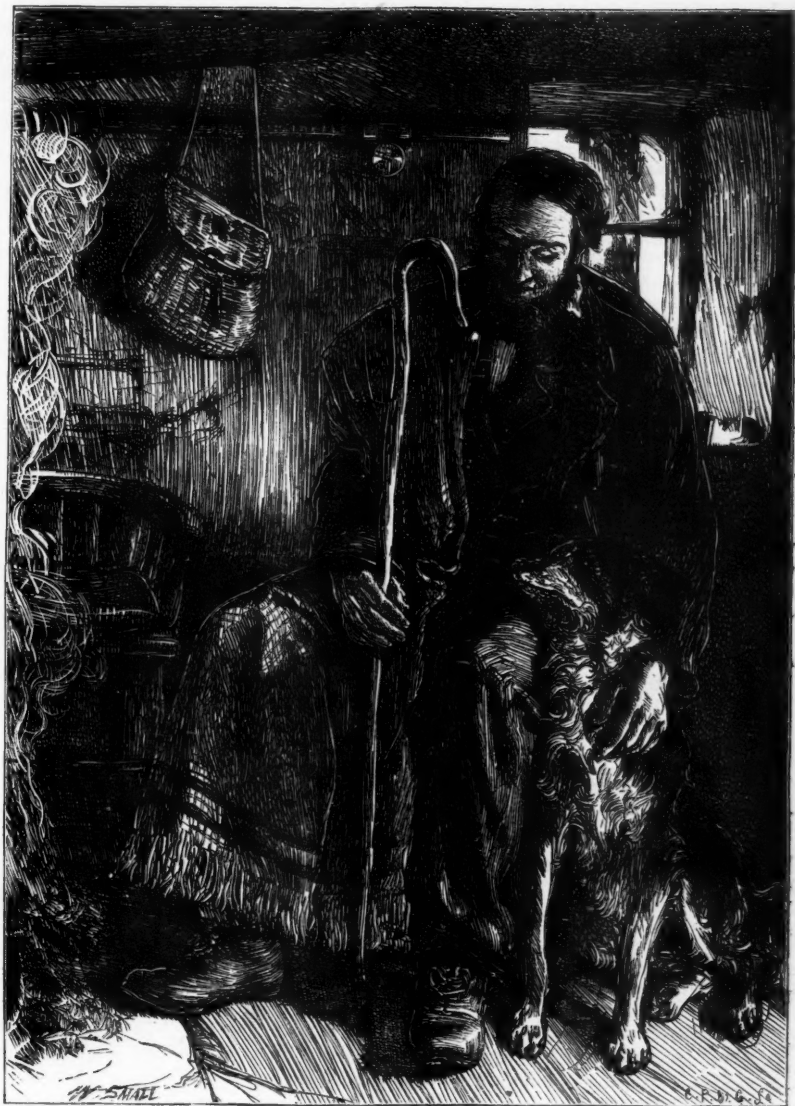
Those Italians who are not rich enough to hire the instrument, as I before said, are paid so many pence the week, and the *padrone* boards and lodges them—how bountifully, we shall see.

In an Italian lodging-house for these wanderers, not far from Holborn, the rooms in which they sleep have little piles of straw, and a small, and, I am sorry to say it, dirty bed-cover—one. When the men rise of a morning, they are each given a mug of so-called coffee, and a slice of bread. When this is disposed of, or part of it—for the poor fellows generally save a piece for twelve o'clock—their instruments are then given to them, and they sally forth to wander many weary miles; and when at nine or ten at night they return home (?), a basin of soup and a piece of bread is their supper.

This is all they get from day to day, unless some kind mistress or servant, taking pity on the organ-man, who has been playing so long, will add some bread and cheese, or broken food, to the halfpenny; and for this the patient fellow will play any length of time to the little group of smiling children whom he has set a-dancing.

Thus it is very easy to see how hardly these poor Italians must work—how hardly they must live, to save the sum which is the *summum bonum* of their desires, and how often their thoughts





(Drawn by W. SMALL.)

"There's life in the old dog yet."—p. 26.

must fly home to the aged mother, to the young wife, or to the betrothed girl, who is waiting—waiting so patiently until the wanderer returns; and he, when he can count the shining pieces, and say, "Enough!" why then over the blue mountains, and home at last!

Then the piece of land is bought, the goat, the cow, and then presently a little cot, which is soon covered with a vine; the garden is fenced in; and here before his admiring eyes is the home for which he has toiled and suffered. But now those days of toil in "*le grande città*" are forgotten, save sometimes when evening comes on; and then, with the little new-made wife at his side—or, better still, the old one faithful and reunited—they sit together under the vines, whilst he tells them of the wonders he saw in "Inghilterra."

One little incident I cannot help noticing, because it illustrates that peculiar delicacy of feeling, under his rough exterior, of which the Italian is capable.

An organ-man, some short time since, had taken for his walk a certain square, with its adjacent streets, for one day in the week. He was one of those happier ones, who was able to hire his own instrument. At certain houses he had been used regularly to receive his twopence, and at Christmas (he had been here two years) always a piece of meat and pudding, and a sixpence.

The time had arrived for him to go back to Italy, and he had told his kind friends so; but

each were astonished to find that when he left the door, after having played as usual, he smilingly put into the hands of the person who gave him his pence a neatly-folded envelope, which, upon being opened, contained a little neatly-printed note of thanks for their kindness, and telling them that, when "he was gone in his Italy, he shall pray—always pray—for the good English lady, and the little mees." The printer who printed it might be censured by some for printing bad English; but, for my part, I think he showed good taste and good feeling in printing it in the Italian's broken English, which by the way, is never inelegant.

Have, then, I pray you, good English folks, some kind feeling for the poor Italian organ-grinder; deal gently with these patient and enduring people; and when we see them amusing little children, and even guiding their little hands to play their instruments, let us, I say, remember their many trials, one of which is the great difference of our dull, grey English climate, as compared with their sunny one; and when inclined to be vexed, because "there is that nasty organ again," endeavour to bear with it, and to remember that every lost penny lengthens the time which divides these men from home, country, and friends.

[The writer is a lady connected with the school (Protestant) for the Italians in Leather Lane, and can vouch for the correctness of the above statement.]

### THERE'S LIFE IN THE OLD DOG YET.

**W**HAT are you moaning at, Rab, old hound,  
Stretched full length on the earthen  
floor?

Well, let us listen, my boy—no sound!  
What if there were? I have barr'd the door.  
The pace will tell in the end, you know;  
And joints must stiffen, and age will fret:  
Though the necks of many a ram could show  
There's life in the old dog yet!

We've tramp'd it many a mile, my dog,  
And been fast friends for many a year;  
We've toiled along through mist and fog.  
Light were our hearts when the dawn was near.  
It was only to-day we were up betide,  
You brushed the dew from the meadow wet,  
And I laugh'd to myself when you left my side  
There's life in the old dog yet!

Well I remember a winter's night,  
The hill-side wrapt in a sheet of snow,  
No moon or stars with a ray of light,  
Never a path to the valley below;  
As we were wandering, you and I,  
You slipped and fell! I shan't forget  
My joy when I heard one moaning cry:  
There was life in the old dog yet!

Bitterly blew the blinding sleet,  
Cruelly bit the scorching frost,  
Dead my fingers and numb'd my feet—  
Better to die than my dog be lost!  
Down I sank on the frozen sod,  
Dug with my stout old crook: we met!  
You'd strength to lick my face, thank God!  
There was life in the old dog yet!

CLEMENT W. SCOTT.

## DEEPPDALE VICARAGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "MARK WARREN."

## CHAPTER III.

## DR. PLUME REFUSES TO EXPLAIN THE MYSTERY.

**D**IONYSIUS staggered against the wall, and remained there a few minutes, oblivious of every earthly consideration. Clara Melrose ill in his house, and likely to be so for some time to come,

was a calamity for which he was not prepared. In fact, it seemed the first step into the abyss he had so much dreaded. When he had recovered somewhat from the shock, he found comfort in one reflection—he might elicit from Dr. Plume that information which his churchwardens had denied to him; he might find out what Clara Melrose had done.

No sooner had the doctor's visit to his patient ended than he was waylaid by Dionysius, and with unusual sociability invited into the drawing-room.

But, alas! again a wicked and cruel mystery beset the path of the young vicar.

Dr. Plume was a mild little man—as mild, in fact, as milk; but he bristled up, and his face grew keenly suspicious as the unfortunate Dionysius opened the subject. Instead of making any answer, he shook his head and looked into his hat, as if the solution of the problem lay there.

"Because," stammered Dionysius, awkwardly, "you must be aware how unfortunate it is that such an occurrence should transpire in my house."

"So it is, sir; so it is," replied Dr. Plume, still steadfastly regarding his hat.

"Especially as I am in total ignorance as to the lady's antecedents, and liable to gross misrepresentation," continued the young divine.

There was no answer to this remark.

"Will you have the kindness to enlighten me?" asked Dionysius, politely. "What has Mrs. Melrose done?"

The doctor knitted his brows in a peculiar manner, and screwed up his lips as tight as he could screw them; but he made no attempt to elucidate the mystery.

"What has she done?" continued Dionysius, getting impatient and determined to force the doctor into speaking.

The doctor shrugged his shoulders with a very knowing air; then he began to button up his great-coat. "You must excuse me, Mr. Curling, if you please. I have no wish to rake up the very unpleasant circumstances of the past. Besides——"

"Besides what?" cried Dionysius, exceedingly nettled.

"Well, sir, all I can say is, I am sorry, and hope no offence; but, bad as she is, it is my opinion that she would never have shown her face in Deepdale without—pardon me—some encouragement from somebody."

"Doctor Plume!" cried Dionysius, his hair almost

standing on end—"you don't suspect me of wishing to harbour her?"

"I mention no names, Mr. Curling," replied the little man, with dignity. "But, of course, sir, it is not likely you should be in ignorance of Mrs. Melrose's past history. No, sir; you can never expect any of us in Deepdale to believe that. Good evening to you, sir."

Dionysius, petrified and aghast, was unable at the moment to detain him; the consequence was that in a few seconds his ears were greeted by the sound of wheels. Dr. Plume was driving off in his gig.

The wretched Dionysius threw himself on his face upon the little sofa and groaned aloud. But even the solace of his study was in some measure denied him.

The vicarage walls were thin, and the unwonted sounds that penetrated them were by no means conducive to his peace of mind. The opening and shutting of doors; the hurrying of women along the passages—the whole female population of Deepdale might have got into the house—were harassing to the nerves of the young vicar. Then, the terrible onus of the thing. The gathering storm of parochial displeasure; the vague reports; the insinuating sneers. Oh! it would be more than he could bear. He had half a mind to order out his horse and flee. But to flee would be to leave his enemies masters of the field. No, come what might, he must stand his ground. He would at once occupy his mind to better purpose, in preparing his sermons for the next Sunday.

Dionysius Curling was a trifle too young for the ministerial calling. His experience of life had not been very profound, and his knowledge of the rural capacity was more limited still. In the place of a plain preaching of the pure and simple doctrine of the Cross, he prepared an elaborate treatise, plentifully besprinkled with hard words and knotty arguments, to the bewilderment of his hearers.

This labour wholly occupied him for the next few days. In it he endeavoured to find a solace from the cares and vexations which oppressed him.

Sunday morning came, and with his sermon elaborated to his own satisfaction, he set out for the small parish church of Deepdale. The weather was propitious, and when that was the case the village street would be dotted over with persons in Sunday trim flocking towards the sacred building. Simon Crosskeys and his wife, and Nathanael Lewin and his wife were usually foremost amid the little flock of worshippers. But on this identical occasion the street was almost entirely deserted. Neither Crosskeys nor Lewin were to be seen. Something was amiss, and already the Vicar of Deepdale grew nervous. Faces peered in an unpleasant manner from the cottage doors and windows; and the men at the corner, the roughs of the place,

whose only business on earth seemed to be to stand there, gave three groans as "the parson" went by.

Dionysius, the muscles of his face quivering with annoyance, walked boldly into church.

The clerk was ringing the bell industriously, and the children of the parochial school were in their places; otherwise, not a creature was visible.

Dionysius marched into the vestry and sat down. On rang the bell. In vain he stretched his ears for the welcome sound of footsteps on the uncovered brick floor. There was not a sound.

The children tittered, the master and mistress looked grave and cold; but not a creature came.

What was he to do? Close the church was an alternative he shrank from. Conduct the service under such circumstances seemed to be impossible. Things were going very hard with him that morning. The clock struck eleven, the usual time for prayers to commence, still Dionysius sat, his hat in his hand, his surplice hanging by the wall. The clock struck, and the bell ceased. At this most distressing crisis in came the clerk.

"Tomkins," said the vicar, sternly, "what is the meaning of this?"

Tomkins hesitated a little. "Well, sir," said he, at length, "you see I don't expect as you won't have any congregation not to-day, sir."

"And why not, pray?" asked the vicar, sharply.

"Well, sir, you see, Master Crosskeys he come, and Master Lewin he come round the parish, sir; and they says, says they——" The man paused, partly from shame, partly from awkwardness.

"Go on," said Dionysius, hurriedly; "what did they say?"

"Well, sir, they says, says they, 'Mrs. Melrose has come to Deepdale, and the new parson has taken her in.' Now, begging your pardon, sir, while that's the case, you can't expect anybody will come to hear you preach."

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE BIG COUNTESS.

LADY LANDON, of the Manor, near Deepdale, and of Landon Castle, on her own estate in Ireland, had well merited her usual title of the "Big Countess."

She was six feet two, as she had been wont to boast exultingly, and her limbs colossal in proportion. Many a frailer specimen, even of the sterner sex, might have slunk away in alarm were her great muscular arm raised against him.

And her ladyship had all the hot Irish blood in her veins; not that her sympathies were Irish, by any means. Quite the reverse.

She had been remarkably handsome, and would have continued so, but that years had exaggerated the national type of feature for which she was conspicuous. Her black eyes had lost none of their brilliancy, and her jetty locks had scarce a touch of grey, but the cheek-bones had become prominent, even to grotesqueness; the complexion, never very delicate, was now coarse; and the mouth wide to

positive ugliness. Her two daughters were facsimiles of what their mother had been some twenty years ago. They were colossal in height, but with the slimness and grace of girlhood; and the irregular type of feature, fully inherited, was veiled in the seductive glow of youthful beauty.

For the rest, the ladies, Juliana and Blanche, were the fastest young women in the county. They had the bodily prowess of men. They could do anything. They could hunt, boat, and fish to the extremest lengths. Their dominion over horses was such that I believe they could, either of them, have ridden the fleetest horse without saddle or bridle.

They were just now attired in riding habits with hats of the newest fashion; their long curls, black as jet, hanging to their waists: for the hunt met at Elm Bridge that morning.

A crowd of admirers, some men of title, all men of position, were waiting below to dance attendance on the two reigning belles of the county. At the last moment their mother had summoned them to her presence.

"Now, July and Blanche, do just listen to what I am going to tell ye, or else ye won't hear it," said Lady Landon, with the Irish accent she was apt now and then to use when she meant to be impressive.

"We are listening, mamma," said July, who was arranging her hat at the mirror. Blanche had thrown herself into an easy chair with the deportment of an empress at least.

"His lordship has gone rat-catching again," said her ladyship, grimly.

"What, poor Phil! is that all?" said July, still arranging her curls.

"All!—my only son, the inheritor of his father's wealth, the representative of one of the oldest families in Britain, seeking his pleasure in catching rats—actually rats!"

"Pshaw, mamma! boys must catch something," returned July, with the utmost indifference.

"Juliana, with such sentiments——"

"What is the poor lad to do, mamma? Rat-catching is about the only thing he can understand."

"Understand!—my son, Juliana, and your brother! Blanche, what do you say?"

"It is all very absurd," said Blanche, languidly, from her throne. "You know as well as we do, mamma, that Phil is deficient in brains."

"At any rate, I shall dismiss his tutor," continued Lady Landon. "If he chooses to break through his engagements, I will break through mine. Phil shall be a scholar."

"Now, mamma, do be easy," said July, giving the finishing-touch to her curls. "I don't care if Mr. Chauncey goes to-morrow; but I know," added she, in an under tone——

"Well, what do you know?" asked her mother.

"I know some one who might be his successor," replied July, speaking out boldly.

"And who is that, pray?"

"The new Vicar of Deepdale."



"Why, what do you know of him, my dear?"

"Only that his sermons are full of words which nobody can understand, and he might knock a few of them into Phil's head. Nothing short of that would pacify you, mamma. So good-bye, mamma. Come along, Blanche."

Blanche was more beautiful than her sister: her complexion was more dazzling, her features a trifle more correct; but she was immeasurably prouder. She looked very splendid mounted on her great black horse, the most vicious brute, by the way, that ever plunged and reared. The young Marquis of Crutchly held her stirrup.

He was over head and ears in love with Blanche.

She did not notice him in any way. She was cold, imperious, and cruel; but to the enamoured youth it was enough to have felt the sole of her foot, the border of her garment. Juliana, who cared more for dogs and horses than she did for their lords, galloped off free as air, leaving her escort to follow.

The mother watched them from her window with a feeling of exultation. She was excessively proud of her girls. When they were out of sight, which happened speedily, her ladyship returned to the matter in hand—the education of her only son, Phillimore Roderic Patrick Landon. She rang the bell.

"James, I wish to see Mr. Chauncey."

With a respectful bow the functionary disappeared, and her ladyship began, with great state and dignity to prepare for the interview. There was a splendid easy chair, gorgeous with gold and velvet, the same in which Blanche had sat. By this she stationed herself, her colossal person erect: she would not lose an inch of her dignity by sitting. The Big Countess was extremely vain of her giant tendencies.

Besides, she had an important work in hand: to get rid of the tutor or ever Phillimore Roderic Patrick Landon returned from the slaughter of his rats!

Standing thus stately and glorious, she listened with some anxiety for the sound of the tutor's footstep.

Presently the door opened, and in came the individual in question, by name Frank Chauncey. When he reached the august presence, he bowed politely. Her ladyship inclined her head, nothing more. It was hardly a recognition.

"Mr. Chauncey, I want to speak to you about my son."

Frank bowed again.

"It seems to me as if his education does not make that progress which we could desire."

Frank Chauncey had a clear, brown eye, remarkably pleasant in its expression. He looked full at her ladyship as she spoke.

"At his age, Mr. Chauncey, he ought to know how to spell. Because, look here, this is one of Phil's productions."

She handed the tutor a scrap of paper, on which were written, most illegibly, the following words:—

MY DEER BLANCHE,—I am sorry I cannot send the books. I am going out after the rats, and hope to catch a grate many.—  
Your affectionate brother,  
PHIL.

"Now, Mr. Chauncey, what do you think of that?"

"I am grieved to say it to your ladyship, but my firm conviction is that no man on earth could teach Lord Landon to spell."

The face of the countess became red with anger.

"Do you know," cried she, "that you are speaking to me of my son?"

"I regret to say I do," replied Frank, respectfully.

She stood a moment speechless with astonishment.

"Mr. Chauncey, do you recollect the terms of our engagement?"

"Perfectly well, Lady Landon."

"Then you recollect also that it terminates to-day?"

She had him at an advantage there. In spite of his outward self-possession, he winced somewhat.

"Knowing my son's peculiarities, I entered into treaty with you for six months only; and the agreement was that at the expiration of that period we should either of us be free. Do you understand me?"

"I understand your ladyship quite well. I am sorry for it. I like the boy."

There was something so unusual in this declaration that her ladyship was silent.

"To attempt to make him like other men, and especially to try to make him a scholar, would be a grand mistake," continued Frank. "He will not learn, nay, more, he cannot."

"Indeed; and you are very bold, Mr. Chauncey," exclaimed the countess, with her most intense brogue, "to say so to his mother."

"I do say it," replied Frank, decidedly, "and time will prove that I am right. Still, I am sorry," added he, with a sigh, "and so, I think, will be my pupil."

"Ah! and that reminds me," hastily interrupted the countess. "As a favour, Mr. Chauncey, will you promise to leave the Manor before his lordship returns? The poor lad is so excitable, so—"

Frank's eye, usually mild and benignant, gave a strange sparkle. None but an infatuated mother would have so treated him.

"May I not see the boy?" asked he, presently.

"Indeed, I would rather not, Mr. Chauncey."

Frank's colour rose. Many thoughts rushed into his mind as he stood there before the throne of the Landon's—thoughts which it was quite as well that her ladyship should know nothing about.

She, on her part, congratulated herself on the skill with which she had managed the business. She even grew quite condescending and courteous.

"I can give you the best of references, Mr. Chauncey," said she; "and I hope you will do well in the world."

"Thank you," replied Frank, blandly.

It was an ultimatum he might have expected, and that had happened to a succession of well-educated, scholarly men before him. Still, it took him by surprise. He went away from the audience-chamber of the Big Countess with a feeling that, if it did not amount to positive grief, was very much akin to it.

He was disgraced and dismissed.

## CHAPTER V.

## FRANK'S FAREWELL TO LADY LUCY.

THERE were some of Lady Landon's most pretentious acquaintances who professed entire ignorance of the fact that, besides Juliana and Blanche, the Big Countess had yet another daughter.

The Lady Lucy was a complete nonentity. Her very birth seemed a mistake, or, so to speak, an Irish blunder.

The countess, her august mother, had set her mind, not unnaturally, perhaps, on a son and heir.

She was determined, with all the pertinacity of her nature, that such should be the case. She made every preparation for a great and solemn rejoicing. She talked of nothing else, boasted of nothing else; nothing else would content her ambition—when, lo! one chilly December night, close upon Christmas, there was sent to her—a daughter. Yes, a daughter. She had two already—as if that were not enough. But Juliana and Blanche had been splendid infants. This was a puny, wailing creature, so fragile that a breath might blow it away.

Her ladyship never either forgot or forgave the disappointment—not even when, some years after, the bells rang and the bonfires blazed, and the long-expected heir lay in his cradle; and not even when, some few—very few years after that, her husband, on his death-bed, charged her to “cherish and tenderly nurture the girl Lucy.”

She had not forgiven it then. Besides, Lucy was so unlike the rest of her tribe. I should be puzzled to say where she got her dove-like eyes, of tender blue, her small but beautifully-formed figure, her clustering hair of Saxon auburn, her regular though delicate features. Not from her mother, or from her father either.

But her meek and saint-like spirit, her thoughtful but not uncheerful mien, her love of those things not realised by the circle in which she lived, those everlasting treasures which “the Lord hath prepared for them that love him”—these were given her from above. Perhaps neglect and coldness had driven her to seek better and more abiding joys than those the world bestows.

Lucy Landon was as solitary as a nun in her cell. Her delicate health and retiring habits had led her to shrink from society; and the Big Countess cared little for introducing her into the brilliant circles where Juliana and Blanche shone like stars.

“She is not like her mother,” the countess would say. “Where is her spirit, I should like to know?”

So Lucy bloomed on unseen. She had her books, her favourite studies, her birds, her flowers, her nurse Bridget, who had brought her up with all the passionate fondness of a warm-hearted Irish dependent. But this was all. Her mother she rarely saw in private—more rarely still her sisters.

She was ascending the great staircase on her return from the village, on this identical morning, when, just as she reached the landing, she met, quite suddenly and unexpectedly, Frank Chauncey.

He had just received his dismissal.

The young man paused. Very rarely did he venture into that part of the house. The splendid skirts of Juliana and Blanche would have swept him out of existence. Not so those of the Lady Lucy.

She smiled courteously, and would have passed on her way, but he stopped her.

“Will your ladyship allow me to tell you that I am dismissed?”

“Dismissed!”

There was a touch of pain in the tone, but most of all of surprise.

“Yes,” said Frank, his clear, genial eyes fixed upon her, it must be confessed, with some degree of admiration. “I cannot teach his lordship to spell.”

“Oh, Mr. Chauncey, everybody knows poor Phil’s deficiencies. Surely mamma—”

She paused, as if recollecting herself; then added, quickly, “Surely you are not serious?”

Frank shook his head.

“Then I am very sorry. Poor Phil!”

“Lady Lucy,” said Frank, “you understand the nature of your brother—few persons do; and you understand what I have been trying to teach him.”

“Oh, yes, yes,” cried she, eagerly, “I know.”

“And you have influence with him. I am sure you will use it for good.”

“I will try,” replied she, a flush coming into her pale countenance.

“He is a strange compound,” continued Frank, “and the ordinary process of education would be lost upon him. But he has fine qualities, notwithstanding. He loves his country.”

It was a bold thing to say. Ireland was a tabooed subject among the Landons.

“I commit him to your care,” continued Frank, earnestly. “I hope his career may be a noble one; and it will, if he spends it in improving the condition of his neglected Irish subjects.”

Every one knew what that condition was, and had been ever since Lady Landon compelled her lord to reside in England.

The girl bowed slightly. Then, as if ashamed of her coldness, she said, “You may rely upon me, Mr. Chauncey. I will.”

“Thank you, Lady Lucy. You are very good.”

He stood one moment—not more—looking at her. Just above was a great window, of stained glass, with the crests of the Landons. The light stealing through the gold and purple made a kind of halo round the young girl’s head.

So fragile, so ethereal, she seemed, her hand so white, her face so pure and saint-like, that some terrible fear struck like a knell upon Frank Chauncey’s heart. To see her sometimes, to be near her, to catch the light of her blue eyes, to render her all the service that he could, so far removed, was to him a state of bliss beyond compare. And now he was rent away from all this—ruthlessly and without mercy, and, it might be, for ever.

Still, he could at least bid her farewell. He must do it quickly, for he was on debatable ground, and,

therefore, running some kind of hazard; and he said, in a tone of deep concern and sorrow—

"Will your ladyship allow me to take leave of you?"

She put out her hand kindly and cordially, and her sweet dove-like eyes beamed upon him.

"Good-bye, Mr. Chauncey. I am very sorry."

He held her hand only a moment. Every pulse throbbed, and he dare not trust himself to speak. Then he dropped the hand gently, and, bowing, went away.

(To be continued.)

## BESSIE'S CONQUEST; OR, THE RIVAL QUEENS.

A STORY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.



"H, mamma! what do you think? We are going to have a holiday from school on the first of May. There is to be such fun in the woods, and, best of all, there is to be a May queen. She will have a throne built for her, and be crowned with flowers, and have all her own way, for the rest will be her subjects and bound to obey her commands. You will have my best white frock washed ready, won't you, mamma? for, of course, the queen must be dressed in white."

"Are you to be the queen, then, Bessie?" said her mamma, looking up from her work.

"Oh, I shall be sure to be the one chosen, for I am the prettiest girl in the school," and she shook her long bright curls and swung round upon one foot.

It was not to be denied that she was the prettiest, and several of her schoolfellows had injudiciously fostered her vanity by telling her so.

"I would rather be chosen because I was the most amiable, if I were you," said her mamma, quietly.

"Oh, amiable or not, I shall be chosen," said Bessie, gaily; "for papa is almost as rich as the squire, I've heard the girls say, and they are nearly all poor, so they will not think of choosing any one else. I only wish one of them would propose another candidate at the same time that Marian Harland proposes me, because then I should have the pleasure of triumphing over her;" and with a toss of the head the little girl slipped out of the room.

A few days after the announcement made by Bessie, the girls met in the woods, in order to choose their queen.

Marian Harland proposed Bessie, and requested the girls to hold up their hands as a sign of approval. But before a hand could be raised, another of the senior scholars stepped forward and proposed Mary Summers as the most fitting of all their companions to fill the post of honour.

"She is not here," continued her friend, "and therefore I may say she is the most gentle, amiable, and unassuming amongst us. I think you will all admit that Mary most deserves this honour."

"Why, Kate, what can you be thinking of to propose Mary Summers?" said Marian, angrily. "Ten to one if she will be able even to come out that day. You know she can never spare time to play; she is obliged to sit at that tiresome needlework to help her mother."

"That is just the reason why she should have a holiday for once," said the persistent Kate; "and therefore I demand that a regular election take place to-morrow."

"Oh, yes, let it be so by all means!" said Bessie, in an exulting tone. "I shall then have the glory of a triumph," she whispered to Marian.

"Now, girls," said Kate, "you must each bring a piece of paper to-morrow morning, with the name of the candidate you wish chosen written upon it. One of us will act as umpire, and receive them as you go out of school."

This plan was cordially agreed to by all the girls, and an umpire was immediately chosen.

"Mamma, I shall have the pleasure of winning my throne, after all," said Bessie, as soon as she reached home; "one of the girls has proposed Mary Summers, the poorest of all the scholars."

"But the most amiable and dutiful, I should think, from all I hear your papa say of her conduct during her mother's illness," said Mrs. Otway. (Mr. Otway was a surgeon.) "I wish my little girl was more like her."

"Like her, mamma!—like plain, shy Mary Summers? You can't mean it!"

"I do, indeed, Bessie. I would rather see a plain face, with a gentle, amiable, modest temper, than one ever so beautiful accompanied with pride, vanity, and self-will, as I am sorry to say my Bessie's features are deformed by."

"Deformed, mamma! You cannot mean that I am deformed, mamma?"

"I do, my child, mean to say that your ungoverned temper and vanity are great deformities; and Mary Summers' plain face is far more beautiful in my estimation, and in that of all sensible people."

Bessie left the room with tears in her eyes, to think more seriously over what her mother had said than she had ever thought before, and to resolve to try and overcome her deformities of temper and disposition.

The next day, when the papers were given up, the girls crowded eagerly round the umpire to see her open and count them. Thirty bore the name of Mary Summers, and sixteen that of Bessie Otway. Mortification, disappointment, and passion were all depicted in Bessie's countenance when she heard it; while unfeigned astonishment was plainly written on the face of Mary as she murmured, "I can't understand it."

I wish you had chosen Bessie, she looks so disappointed." Pushing her way through the crowd to where Bessie was standing, Mary said, gently, "I'm so sorry to have caused you this disappointment, but I assure you I did not——"

The rest of the sentence was lost; for giving her a push which sent her to the ground, Bessie rushed away, furious with passion and wounded vanity.

"Oh, what a shame!" exclaimed several, and they hastened to raise Mary, and then discovered that her face was bleeding. She had fallen on a piece of broken glass, which had inflicted a deep cut on her forehead, from which the blood streamed profusely.

At this moment Mr. Otway's gig came round the corner of the lane, and he stopped to ask if Bessie was among them.

"Yes" and "No," replied several voices together, and then he saw Mary's blood-stained face.

"Why, what is the matter here?" he exclaimed, jumping down from his seat, and taking a roll of strapping plaster from his pocket. "What, is it you, my little nurse Mary? Where did you fall?"

The spot was pointed out, and the doctor saw the glass lying near.

"I must take you home with me, Mary, and see if any of the glass has got into the wound," and tying a handkerchief round her head, he lifted her into the chaise, and asked her how she came to fall down.

"Please don't ask me, sir," said Mary, colouring.

"Why not?" asked the doctor; "have you any good reason for wishing me not to know?"

"Yes, sir," answered Mary; "and I shall be very much obliged if you will not ask anybody about it."

"But what will your mother say?"

"Oh, I will tell my mother all about it, sir."

When Mr. Otway examined the cut more closely, he discovered a particle of the broken glass in it, which was with some difficulty removed, and then it was strapped up again, and she went home.

Meanwhile, Bessie had rushed off to the woods, where, sitting down upon the roots of a tree, she gave free vent to the storm of passion that raged in her heart. Half an hour passed, and still she sat there crying, although more quietly. At length she determined to go home, and, stooping down, she bathed her face in a little stream that trickled close by, so as to remove all traces of her tears.

Not long after she had reached home, Mr. Otway entered the room, and as soon as they were seated at the table, he mentioned what had happened to Mary Summers.

"How did it happen?" asked Mrs. Otway.

"There's a little mystery about that," said her husband, "which Miss Mary is most anxious I should not discover. She looked quite distressed, in fact, when I asked for an explanation: if she were not such a good, obedient child, I should be inclined to think she had been doing something wrong; but as it is, I am much more inclined to think she is screening somebody else from blame."

As soon as dinner was over, Bessie hastened up to her own room, and sat down to think over the occur-

rences of the last few months, and especially of the last few days; and, as she recalled the frequent instances of her own vanity and selfishness, and compared them with what she knew of her rival's behaviour, she could not help exclaiming, "Yes, mamma is right—Mary is the most beautiful, with the best kind of beauty;" and then followed resolutions to imitate Mary's example. And we may believe that these resolutions were afterwards practised, for she knelt down by the bedside and asked God to help her to keep them; and we know none ever fervently ask the help of God in vain.

She then went down-stairs and told her mamma all that had happened, and how she believed it was to screen her Mary would not tell how she fell down.

"May I go and see Mary after tea, mamma?" she added. "I should like to ask her forgiveness."

Mrs. Otway readily consented to allow this, and thus the rival queens became fast friends.

"There is one thing I should like, mamma," said Bessie, when she returned from Mary's home, "and that is, to make Mary a beautiful queen. You know she has nothing but black frocks, and that is not at all the colour for a queen. May I give her my white one, that you have had washed? I should like to see her look pretty for that day."

"Do you really wish it, Bessie?" said Mrs. Otway.

"Yes, mamma. I am going to try and conquer and get rid of my deformities, as you called them."

"Then it shall be as you wish. The frock will not want any altering, as Mary is just your size."

The first of May was "the maddest, merriest day of all the glad new year;" and none worked more diligently in weaving garlands for the queen than Bessie; and when Mary appeared, dressed in the beautiful white frock, none admired her more or envied her less than Bessie. And who will deny that, with help from above, she had thus conquered that which is hardest of all to conquer—self?

#### KEY TO ENIGMA ON PAGE 16.

"All flesh is as grass."—1 Peter i. 24.

1. A hijah .....	1 Kings xiv. 6.
2. Laish .....	Judg. xviii. 27.
3. Laish's .....	1 Sam. xxv. 41.
4. Festus's .....	Acts xxv. 3, 4.
5. Libnah .....	2 Chron. xxi. 10.
6. Ehad .....	Judg. iii. 15.
7. Seirath .....	Judg. iii. 26.
8. Hefam .....	2 Sam. x. 17.
9. Ishmael .....	Jer. xli. 7.
10. Sharez .....	2 Kings xix. 37.
11. A bishai .....	1 Chron. xi. 20.
12. Shemaiah .....	Neh. vi. 10.
13. Geshur .....	2 Sam. xiii. 33.
14. Rabshakeh .....	Isa. xxxvi. 4.
15. A holiah .....	Exod. xxxviii. 23.
16. S hophach .....	1 Chron. xix. 16.
17. S orek .....	Judg. xvi. 4.

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